AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

Please **AMEND** claims 1 and 7; and **ADD** new claims 9-21. A copy of all pending claims and a status of each may be found below.

1. (Currently amended) An automatic liquid handling system comprising:

a dispensing tip container having a plurality of holding portions for holding a plurality of dispensing tips;

a dispensing head having attachment portions to which at least one dispensing tip selected from the plurality of dispensing tips is attached, wherein when one or more dispensing tips are attached to the attachment portions, the dispensing head is capable of performing sucking and expelling operations for sucking liquid in or expelling the liquid out from the one or more dispensing tips;

moving means for moving the dispensing head;

a reagent container that holds at least one reagent;

a microplate formed with a plurality of wells for holding specimen;

a control device that controls the sucking and expelling operations performed by the dispensing head and also controls the moving means to control movements of the dispensing head, the control device having input means for inputting one or more processes to be executed by the dispensing head; and

time measuring means for measuring time starting from dripping the reagent into selected wells on the microplate by the expelling operation performed by the dispensing head and triggering dispensing a stop solution at a predetermined time based on the measuring.

2. (Original) The automatic liquid handling system according to claim 1, further comprising time setting means for setting a time to finish the one or more processes to be executed by the dispensing head.

3. (Original) The automatic liquid handling system according to claim 2, wherein the plurality of wells formed in the microplate is arranged in a matrix form defined by rows and columns, and the time measuring means comprises a plurality of timers, each of the plurality of timers being provided for each of the rows and each of the columns of the plurality of wells for enabling measurement of time on a row or a column basis.

4. (Original) The automatic liquid handling system according to claim 3, wherein the control device performs the expelling operation to drip another reagent into selected wells of the microplate when the time measuring means has measured a predetermined period of time.

5. (Original) The automatic liquid handling system according to claim 1, further comprising a display that indicates the time measured by the time measuring means.

6. (Original) The automatic liquid handling system according to claim 1, further comprising storage means for storing the time measured by the time measuring means.

7. (Currently amended) An automatic liquid handling system comprising:

a dispensing tip container having a plurality of holding portions for holding a plurality of

dispensing tips;

a dispensing head having attachment portions to which at least one dispensing tip selected from the plurality of dispensing tips is attached, wherein when one or more dispensing tips are attached to the attachment portions, the dispensing head as capable of performing sucking and expelling operations for sucking liquid in or expelling the liquid out from the one or more dispensing tips;

moving means for moving the dispensing head;

a reagent container that holds at least one reagent;

a mircoplate formed with a plurality of wells for holding specimen;

a control device that controls the sucking and expelling operations performed by the dispensing head and also controls the moving means to control movements of the dispensing head, the control device having input means for inputting one or more processes to be executed by the dispensing head; and

self-diagnosing means for ~~stimulating~~ simulating time to execute the one or more processes to be executed by the dispensing head and determining whether the one or more processes are executable within a predetermined time ~~in the time set by the time setting means~~.

8. (Original) The automatic liquid handling system according to claim 7, wherein the self-diagnosing means comprises informing means for informing an operator of a result of determination.

9. (New) The automatic liquid handling system of claim 7, wherein the predetermined time is related to a sum total of processing times for a plurality of wells.

10. (New) An automatic liquid handling system, comprising:

means for dispensing at least one reagent to a matrix of wells;

means for determining a time duration starting from the dispensing of the at least one reagent; and

means for dispensing a stop solution to the matrix of wells, wherein the means for dispensing a stop solution dispenses the stop solution based on the time duration exceeding a predetermined time.

11. (New) The automatic liquid handling system of claim 10, wherein the predetermined time is maintained separately for one or more rows of the matrix of wells and the stop solution is dispensed for one of the one or more rows.

12. (New) The automatic liquid handling system of claim 10, wherein the predetermined time is maintained separately for one or more columns of the matrix of wells and the stop solution is dispensed for one of the one or more columns.

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13. (New) The automatic liquid handling system of claim 10, further comprising means for self-determining that a requested series of dispensing processes is able to complete processing within the predetermined time period.

14. (New) The automatic liquid handling system of claim 13, wherein the means for self-determining generates an alert when the requested series of dispensing processes is unable to complete processing within the predetermined time period.

15. (New) An automatic liquid handling system comprising:

a dispensing tip container having a plurality of holding portions for holding a plurality of dispensing tips, the holding portions being arranged in a matrix form defined by rows and columns;

a dispensing head having attachment portions to which a plurality of dispensing tips are attached, wherein when dispensing tips are attached to the attachment portions, the dispensing head is capable of performing sucking and expelling operations for sucking liquid in or expelling the liquid out from the dispensing tips;

moving means for moving the dispensing head;

a reagent container having a plurality container portions for storing a reagent and having a plurality container portions for storing a reaction stop solution;

a microplate formed with a plurality of wells for holding specimen, the wells being arranged in a matrix form defined by rows and columns;

a control device that controls the sucking and expelling operations performed by the dispensing head and also controls the moving means to control movements of the dispensing head, wherein the control device includes input means for inputting one or more processes to be executed by the dispensing head, time setting means for setting a period of time between introduction of the reagent into a row or a column of the microplate and introduction of the reaction stop solution into the row or the column of the microplate; and

time measuring means for measuring a period of time starting from the reagent is dispensed into the row or the column of the microplate so that a dispense

reaction will not be stopped before the measured period of time has reached the set period of time.

16. (New) The automatic liquid handling system according to claim 15, wherein said time measuring means comprises a plurality of timers, each of the plurality of timers being provided for each of the columns of the plurality of wells of the micropolate for enabling measurement of time on a column basis.

17. (New) The automatic liquid handling system according to claim 15, wherein the time measuring means comprises a plurality of timers, each of the plurality of timers being provided for each of the rows of the plurality of wells for enabling measurement of time on a row basis.

18. (New) The automatic liquid handling system according to claim 15, wherein the control device controls to dispense another reagent into selected wells of the microplate when the time measuring means has measured a predetermined period of time.

19. (New) The automatic liquid handling system according to claim 15, further comprising a display that indicates the time measured by the time measuring means.

20. (New) The automatic liquid handling system according to claim 15, further comprising storage means for storing the time measured by the time measuring means.

21. (New) An automatic liquid handling system comprising:

a dispensing tip container having a plurality of holding portions for holding a plurality of dispensing tips;

a dispensing head having attachment portions to which at least one dispensing tip selected from the plurality of dispensing tips is attached, wherein when one or more dispensing tips are attached to the attachment portions, the dispensing head is capable of performing sucking and expelling operations for sucking liquid in or expelling the liquid out from the one or more dispensing tips;

moving means for moving the dispensing head;

a reagent container that holds at least one reagent;

a microplate formed with a plurality of wells for holding specimen; and

a control device that controls the sucking and expelling operations performed by the dispensing head and also controls the moving means to control movements of the dispensing head, wherein the control device includes input means for inputting one or ore processes executed by the dispensing head, simulation means for calculating a period of time required for executing the one or more processes, judging means for determining whether the one or more processes can be performed within a predetermined period of time, and display means for indicating an alarm if the calculated period of time for executing the one or more processes exceeds the predetermined period of time.